

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

14 94	Marion	N, AA	MRN.232
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Town/City: MARION

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Marion Village -
Main Street (MRN.AA)

Photograph



Address: 17 Main Street

Historic Name: Eli and Susan Sherman House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: [1855-1875]

Source: 1855 Walling Map, deed research

Style/Form: Greek Revival-Italianate

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Granite

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard, wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Small outbuilding (pre-1879, Photo 4)

Major Alterations (*with dates*)*:

Alterations/additions to rear ell (dates unknown)

*Based on Property Card and/or observation

Condition: Good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 0.15 acres

Setting: The surrounding area includes historic houses sited relatively close to the street and to each other along Main Street. Most houses on the north side of Main Street are set closer to the street than those on the south side, including this one. The narrow front yard of this property is landscaped with a planting bed secured by granite curbstones. A small yard to the west of the house is obscured from the street by a tall wood board fence. This is one of the houses on the north side of Main Street whose parcel backs up to Hiller Street. As the parcel slopes down to the north, the rear of the parcel is secured by a low granite retaining wall with board fence.

Locus Map



Aerial Imagery, 2021

Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant

Organization: Sippican Historical Society

Date (*month / year*): February 2023

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MARION

17 MAIN STREET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

This 1½-story, gable-front house, built ca. 1855-1875, has character-defining features of both the Greek Revival and Italianate styles. The Greek Revival style, popular from ca. 1825 to 1860, was inspired by then new Greek archeological discoveries, and employed temple forms and details for domestic American architecture. As employed here, the gable-front form itself was intended to evoke a temple pediment, especially with the projecting molded box cornice with partial returns across the gable ends, and the corner pilasters (flat columns). The front door surround is also typical of the style with the full sidelights, and the heavy enframements with “ears” (a term for how the upper frame extends slightly beyond the edge of the lower frame). The wood 6/6 windows are also characteristic of the Greek Revival style.

The Italianate style, popular from ca. 1840-1885, was a reaction against the formalism of earlier styles, and was intended to create a more “picturesque” effect reminiscent of Italian villas and farmhouses. The feature on this house which is influenced by the Italianate style is the use of brackets in the roof entablature, including paired brackets above the corner pilasters.

This house rests, like most 19th century houses in the village, on a rough-cut granite foundation. The front elevation is clad in wood clapboard (“dressing up” the front of the house), and the side elevations are clad in wood shingles. The house has two telescoping rear ells/additions. The first ell is shown on the 1879 Plymouth County Atlas (Figure 5), and the second ell, reaching to Hiller Street, was in place by the time the 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map was prepared (Figure 2). Note also on the 1908 map that the enclosed side porch was originally an open porch. This second rear ell appears to have been substantially altered/ expanded.

There is an interesting small outbuilding in the northwest corner of the property (Photo 4). The gable-roofed cottage has bargeboards with quatrefoil cut-outs, and a door with lancet-shaped windows. This may be the outbuilding shown on the 1879 Atlas (Figure 5).

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

While there had been some economic activity and residential development in Sippican Village prior to the Revolution, residential development accelerated in the early-1800s, as happened in many coastal Massachusetts towns, with boat building, whaling, coastal schooner trade, and the salt industry driving the economy. The construction of the First Congregational Meeting House in 1799, now Marion General Store (140 Front Street, MRN.22), also helped make Sippican Village the center for spiritual and civic life.¹ Residential (and limited commercial) development was initially concentrated along the Front Street/Main Street axis, and the harbor became the site for maritime-related utilitarian buildings and wharfs. By the time the 1855 Walling Map was prepared, additional streets had been laid out, but Main Street from the harbor west to Pleasant Street was the most densely developed street in the village (Figure 3).

According to the 1998 Wharf Village Area Form (MRN.N), this house was built in ca. 1855-1879 for Henry C. Nye. Based on current research, however, it appears the house was built in ca. 1855-1875 for Eli and Susan Sherman. The Assessor date for this house is 1840, but there is no house in this location on the 1855 Walling Map of Marion (Figure 4). The house is shown on the 1879 Plymouth County Atlas with the name “H. C. Nye” (Figure 5). Henry C. Nye (1838-1917) married Sarah H. Cole (1845-

¹ Marion was first settled in 1679 as Sippican, a district of Rochester, and was not incorporated as a separate town until 1852. The name Sippican Village continues to be used interchangeably with Marion Village.

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1938) in Marion in 1866. The Nyes were living in Rochester in 1875 when they bought this property, with reference to a dwelling, from Eli Sherman of Marion.²

Eli Sherman (1831-1875) was married to Susan (Taber). In the 1870 US Census, they were living with another young couple, mariner John Blankinship and his wife, Charlotte. Sherman was listed as a shoemaker in Census records. Eli Sherman also owned what may still have been a shop down the street at 10 Main Street (MRN.225), possibly where he operated his business. There are no deeds showing how/when the Shermans bought this property, but if the 1855 and 1879 maps are accurate, this house would have built sometime after 1855 and before 1875, when they sold it to the Nyes.³ The Shermans bought land on the next block of Main Street that year. Eli Sherman died three months later, but his wife Susan proceeded to build 54 Main Street (MRN.252).

Henry Nye had a varied professional life in census records: retail grocer (1870), railroad station agent (1880), expressman (1900), and town treasurer (1910). In 1882, the Nyes sold the house to Lucius Campbell of Marion.⁴ Until that time, Campbell (1827-1910) had been a NY-based farmer. In 1897, Campbell sold it to James F. and Rebecca Hammond of Mattapoissett.⁵ James Hammond (1852-1923) had been a saloon keeper (1880 Census), and while owning this house, was listed in the 1900 Census as a bicycle repairman. They sold the house in 1905 and moved to San Diego, CA.⁶ They sold it to Walter K. Perry of Marion. He was listed living here in the 1910 Census with his wife, Anna, their young daughter, and a boarder, and he was working as a boatman for a private family. This is an example of how local employment shifted from maritime industrial to supporting the summer colony. This house remained in the Perry family until 1965.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Maps and Atlases:

1855, Walling, H. F. *Map of the Town of Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts*, 1855.

1879, *Atlas of Plymouth County, Massachusetts*. Boston: Geo. H Walker & Co, 1879.

1903, *Atlas of Surveys of Plymouth County*. Springfield, MA: L. J. Richards Co., 1903.

1908, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts*. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1908.

1933, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Marion, Plymouth County, Massachusetts*. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1933.

Ancestry.com – Vital records.

Dempsey, Claire. MHC Area Form AA, Main Street, 2021.

Gordon, Edward. MHC Area Form N, Wharf Village, 1998.

Plymouth County Registry of Deeds

Sippican Historical Society Collections.

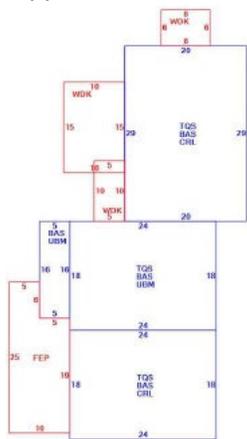


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch.

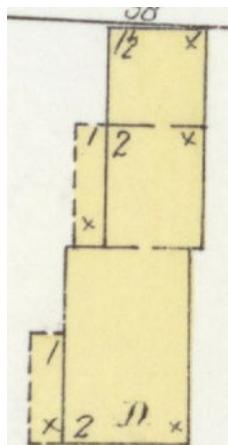


Figure 2. Detail of 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

² Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 419/ Page 133.

³ In October of 1875, the Shermans bought land farther west on Main Street to build a new house (54 Main Street, MRN.252). Eli Sherman died in November of that year, but Susan Sherman completed construction of the house and sold it in 1876.

⁴ PCR D, Book 486/ Page 531.

⁵ PCR D, Book 736/ Page 531.

⁶ PCR D, Book 918/ Page 319.

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Photo 2. View from Main Street, looking NNW.



Photo 3. View from Hiller Street, looking SE.



Photo 4. View of outbuilding from Hiller Street, looking SE.

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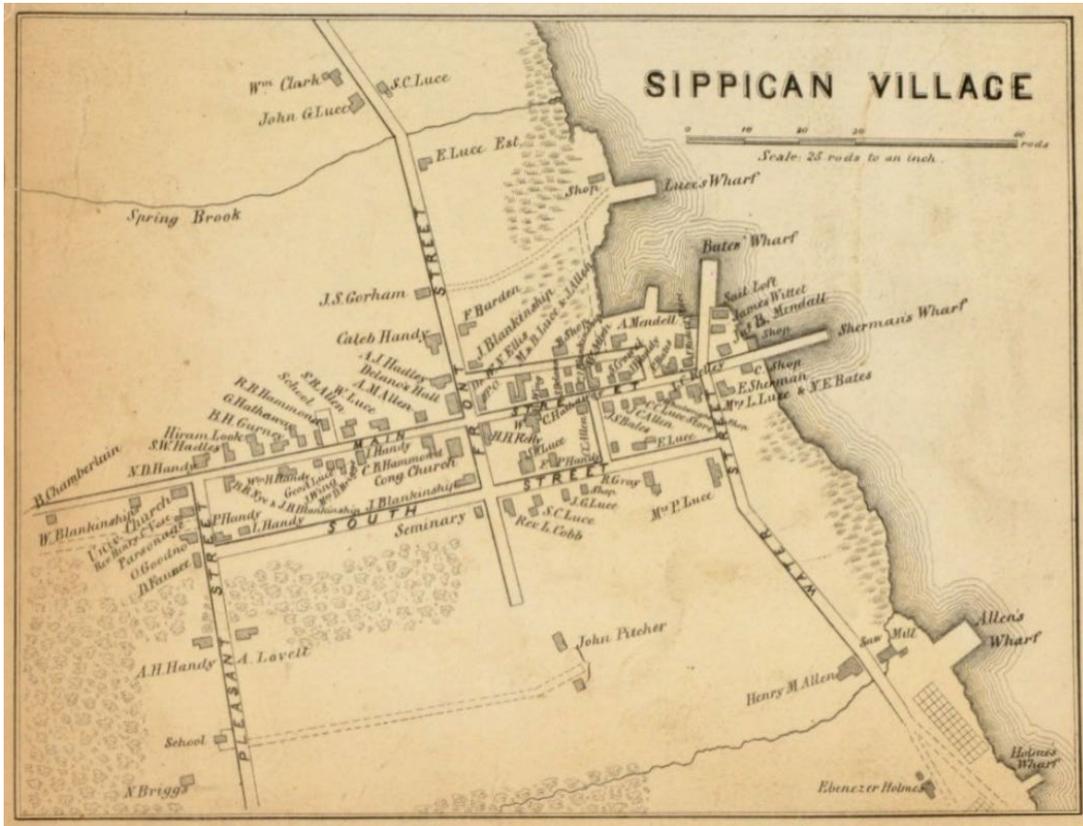


Figure 3. 1855 Walling Map of Marion, Sippican Village Inset Map.

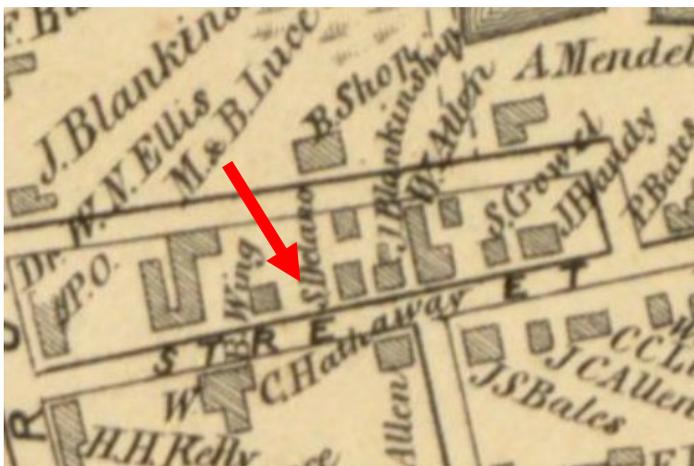


Figure 4. Detail of 1855 Walling Inset Map (arrow added).

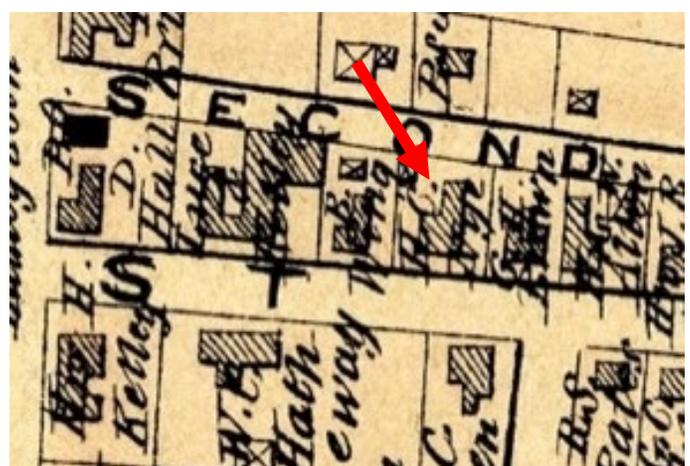


Figure 5. Detail of 1879 Plymouth County Atlas (arrow added).

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- Individually eligible Eligible **only** in a historic district
- Contributing to a potential historic district Potential historic district

Criteria: **A** **B** **C** **D**

Criteria Considerations: **A** **B** **C** **D** **E** **F** **G**

Statement of Significance by Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant for Sippican Historical Society
The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

This property is a contributing resource in the combined Areas of Wharf Village-Sippican Village (MRN.N) and Water Street (MRN.L), hereinafter referred to as Marion Village.*

Marion Village is recommended as eligible for listing at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Maritime History. Marion Village contains the great majority of buildings connected to Marion's historical maritime development beginning in the late-18th century. With the rise of saltmaking, shipyards, and whaling, maritime activity increased dramatically into the mid-19th century, as did residential development in Marion Village. In addition to the houses built by those in the maritime industry, Marion Village contains numerous buildings and structures associated with maritime industrial activity, including a chandlery, sail loft, cooperage, and wharves. As Marion Village's prosperity became linked to Sippican Harbor, Marion Village also became the commercial, political and institutional center of the town.

Marion Village is also recommended as eligible for listing at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Entertainment/ Recreation. Starting in the mid-19th century, maritime activity declined significantly. The decline in maritime activity was eventually replaced by the rise in the 1870s of a summer colony as Marion Village emerged as an elite summer resort. This was facilitated by the arrival of train service in the 1854. Summer visitors, including artists and writers, were drawn Sippican Harbor's beauty and tranquility. A large hotel, the Sippican Hotel, was located at the corner of South and Water Streets, and a few houses were converted to inns. While the hotel was town down in 1929, a large livery complex built by the Hiller Brothers at 147 Front Street (MRN.216) is extant. They provided horse-drawn vehicles to summer visitors registered at the Sippican Hotel, and ferried guests back and forth between the hotel and the train depot. In Marion Village, ownership (or occupancy through rental) of many houses began to shift from local maritime families to seasonal residents, including nationally-noteworthy politicians, businessmen, artists and writers. During this period, Marion Village also saw the addition of high style, architect-designed summer cottages and recreation resources.

Marion Village is recommended as eligible for listing at the local level under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Marion Village is a remarkably intact historic town center, including a compact collection of historic dwellings, along with a few churches, schools, commercial buildings and recreation buildings. Marion Village contains a great concentration of Federal and Greek Revival houses; and examples of later Victorian-era styles, including high-style examples of summer house architecture along Sippican Harbor and large institutional buildings not found elsewhere in Marion.

The great majority of resources in Marion Village retain substantial integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, design, feeling, and association.

*The potential Marion Village district boundaries include surveyed areas within the boundary of MRN.N completed in 2020-2022 for Barden-Hiller (MRN.Y), Cottage Street (MRN.Z), Main Street (MRN.AA), South Street (MRN.AB), Upper Pleasant Street (MRN.AC), and Upper Main Street (MRN.AH).